

108. Surah Al Kauthar (The Abundance)

Name

The Surah has been so designated after the word *al-kauthar* occurring in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

Ibn Marduyah has cited Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas, Hadrat Abdullah bin az-Zubair and Hadrat Aishah as saying that this Surah is Makki. Kalbi and Muqatil also regard it as Makki, and the same is the view held by the majority of commentators. But Hadrat Hasan Basri, Ikrimah, Mujahid and Qatadah regard it as Madani. Imam Suyuti in *Al-Itqan* has confirmed this same view, and Imam Nawawi in his commentary of the *Sahih* of Muslim has also preferred the same. The reason for this assumption is the tradition which traditionists of the rank of Imam Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Daud, Nasai, Ibn Abi Shaibah, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Marduyah, Baihaqi and others have related from Hadrat Anas bin Malik, saying: "The Holy Prophet was among us. In the meantime he dozed; then he raised his head, smiling, according to some traditions, the people asked what for he was smiling, according to others, he himself told them that a Surah had just been revealed to him. Then, with *Bismillah ir-Rahman ir-Rahim*, he recited Surah Al-Kauthar; then he asked the people whether they knew what Kauthar was. When they said that Allah and his Messenger had the best knowledge, he said; It is a river which my Lord has granted me in Paradise." (The details follow under "*Kauthar*"). The basis of the reasoning from this tradition for this Surah's being Madani is that Hadrat Anas belonged to Madinah, and his saying that this Surah was revealed in his presence is a proof that it was Madani.

But, in the first place, from this same Hadrat Anas, Imam Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi and Ibn Jarir have related the traditions which say that this river of Paradise (*Al-Kauthar*) had been shown to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) on the occasion of the *mi'raj* (ascension) and everyone knows that *mi'raj* had taken place at Makkah before the *hijrah*. Secondly, when during the *mi'raj* the Holy Prophet had not only been informed of this gift of Allah Almighty but also shown it, there was no reason why Surah Al-Kauthar should have been revealed at Madinah to give him the good news of it. Thirdly, if in an assembly of the Companions the Holy Prophet himself had given the news of the revelation of Surah Al-Kauthar which Hadrat Anas has mentioned in his tradition, and it meant that that Surah had been revealed for the first time then, it was not possible that well-informed Companions like Hadrat Aishah, Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas and Hadrat Abdullah bin Zubair should have declared this Surah to be a Makki revelation and most of the commentators also should have regarded it as Makki. If the matter is considered carefully, there appears to be a flaw in the tradition from Hadrat Anas in that it does not say what was the subject under discussion in the assembly in which the Holy Prophet gave the news about Surah Al-Kauthar. It is possible that at that time the Holy Prophet was explaining something. In

the meantime he was informed by revelation that that point was further explained by Surah Al-Kauthar, and he mentioned the same thing, saying that that Surah was revealed to him just then. Such incidents did take place on several occasions, on the basis of which the commentators have opined about certain verses that they were revealed twice. This second revelation, in fact, meant that the verse had been revealed earlier, but on some later occasion the Holy Prophet's attention was invited to it by revelation for the second time. In such traditions, the mention of the revelation of a certain verse is not enough to decide whether it was revealed at Makkah or Madinah, and when precisely it was revealed.

Had this tradition of Hadrat Anas not been there to cause doubt, the whole content of the Surah Al-Kauthar by itself bears evidence that it was revealed at Makkah, and in the period when the Holy Prophet was passing through extremely discouraging conditions.

Historical Background

Before this in Surahs Ad-Duha and Alam Nashrah we have seen that when in the earliest phase of Prophethood the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was passing through the most trying conditions when the whole nation had turned hostile, there was resistance and opposition on every side, and the Holy Prophet and a handful of his Companions did not see any remote chance of success. Allah in order to console and encourage him at that time had sent down several verses. In Surah Ad-Duha it was said: "And surely the later period (i.e. every later period) is better for you than the former period, and soon your Lord shall give you so much that you shall be well pleased". In Surah Alam Nashrah: "And We exalted your renown for you." That is, "Though the enemies are trying to defame you throughout the country, We, on the contrary, have arranged to exalt your name and fame." And: "The fact is that along with every hardship there is also ease." That is, "You should not be disheartened by the severity of conditions at this time; this period of hardships will soon pass, and the period of success and victory will follow."

Such were the conditions in which Allah by sending down Surah Al-Kauthar consoled the Holy Prophet as well as foretold the destruction of his opponents. The disbelieving Quraish said: "Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is cut off from his community and reduced to a powerless and helpless individual. According to Ikrimah when the Holy Prophet was appointed a Prophet, and he began to call the people to Islam, the Quraish said: "Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is cut off from his people as a tree is cut off from its root, which might fall to the ground any moment." (Ibn Jarir). Muhammad bin Ishaq says: "Whenever the Prophet (upon whom be peace) was mentioned before As bin Wa'il as-Sehmi, the chief of Makkah, he used to say: Let him alone for he is only a childless man (*abtar*) with no male offspring. When he dies, there will be no one to remember him." Shamir bin Atiyyah says that Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ait, also used to say similar things about the Holy Prophet, (Ibn Jarir). According to Ibn Abbas, once Ka'b bin Ashraf (the Jewish chief of Madinah) came to Makkah and the Quraish chiefs said to him: "Just see this boy, who is cut off from his people; he thinks he is superior to us, whereas we manage the Hajj, look after the Ka'bah and water the pilgrims." (Bazzar). Concerning this very incident Ikrimah reports that the Quraish had used the words *as-sunbur al-munbatir min qaumi-hi* (a weak, helpless and childless man who is cut off from his people) for the Holy Prophet. (Ibn Jarir) Ibn Sa'd and Ibn Asakir have related that Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas said; "The eldest son of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was Qasim; next to him was Zainab, next to her Hadrat Abdullah and next to him three daughters, viz. Umm Kulthum, Fatimah and Ruqayyah. Of them first Hadrat Qasim died and then Hadrat Abdullah. Thereupon As bin Wail said: "His line

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has come to an end: now he is *abtar* (i. e. cut of from root)."Some traditions add that As said "Muhammad is *abtar*: he has no son to succeed him. When he dies, his memory will perish and you will be rid of him."The tradition from Ibn Abbas, which Abd bin Humaid has related, shows that Abu Jahl also had said similar words on the death of the Holy Prophet's son, Abdullah. Ibn Abi Hatim has related on the authority of Shmir bin Atiyyah that the same kind of meanness was shown by Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ait by rejoicing at this bereavement of the Holy Prophet. Ata says that when the second son of the Holy Prophet died, his own uncle, Abu Lahab (whose house was next to his) hastened to the pagans and gave them the "good news": *Batira Muhammadun al-lail*: "Muhammad has become childless this night, or he is cut off from root."

Such were the disturbing conditions under which Surah Al-Kauthar was sent down. The Quraish were angry with him because he worshiped and served only Allah and repudiated their idolatry publicly. For this very reason he was deprived of the rank, esteem and honor that he enjoyed among his people before Prophethood and was now as cut off from his community. The handful of his Companions also were helpless, poor people who were being persecuted and tyrannized. Furthermore, he was bereaved by the death of two sons, one after the other, whereat the near relatives and the people of his clan, brotherhood and neighborhood were rejoicing and uttering such words as were disheartening and disturbing for a noble person who had treated even his enemies most kindly. At this Allah just in one sentence of this brief Surah gave him the good news, better news than which has never been given to any man in the world, besides the decision that it will be his opponents who will be cut off from their root and not he.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ ﴿١﴾

فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَنْحَرْ ﴿٢﴾

إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] (O Prophet,) We have granted you the Kauthar¹ (Abundance). So pray only for your Lord and sacrifice.² Indeed, your enemy³ alone is cut off from the root.⁴

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1The full meaning of the word kauthar, as used here, cannot perhaps be expressed in one word in any language of the world. This is an intensive form of the noun kathrat which literally means abundance, but the context in which it has been used does not give the meaning of mere abundance but abundance of good, of spiritual benefits and blessings, and of such abundance which is unbounded and limitless, and it does not imply any one good or benefit or blessing but abundance of countless benefits and blessings.

Have a look again at the background of this Surah given in the Introduction. The enemies thought that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) had been completely ruined: he was cut off from the community and had become utterly helpless and powerless; his trade was ruined; his male children who could perpetuate his name were dead; the message that he presented was such that except for a handful of the people no one in entire Arabia, not to speak of Makkah, was prepared to listen to it therefore, failure and disappointment would be his lot as long as he lived and there would be no one in posterity to remember him when he died. Under such conditions when Allah said: "We have granted you the Kauthar," it by itself gave the meaning: Your foolish opponents think that you are ruined and deprived of the good things that you enjoyed before Prophethood, but the fact is that We have favored you with unbounded good and countless blessings." This included the matchless moral qualities which the Holy Prophet was blessed with; this included the great blessings of Prophethood and the Qur'an, the knowledge and wisdom that were granted to him; this included the blessing of Tauhid and also of such a system of life, whose simple and intelligible, rational and natural, and comprehensive principles had the potential to spread throughout the world and of continuing to spread for ever afterwards. This also included the blessing of the exaltation of renown because of which the holy Prophet's blessed name continues to be exalted throughout the world since 1400 years and will continue to be so exalted till Resurrection.

This also included the blessing that by his preaching eventually such a world-wide community came into being, which became the standard-bearer of Truth in the world for ever, which can claim to have produced the greatest number of the pious, virtuous and noble charactered men in any one nation, and which even when corrupted and deprived has the highest good in it as against every other nation of the world. This also included the blessing that the Holy Prophet during his very lifetime witnessed his invitation and message attaining to the highest success and the preparation of a community which had the power to dominate the world. This also included the blessing that although on his being deprived of the male offspring the enemies thought he would be lost to posterity, yet Allah not only blessed him with the spiritual offspring in the form of Muslims, who will continue to exalt his name in the world till Resurrection but also granted him from his one daughter, Hadrat Fatimah, the natural progeny, who have spread throughout world and whose only mark of distinction and pride is that they trace their descent from him.

These are the blessings which the people have seen and witnessed as to how abundantly Allah has blessed His Holy prophet within the world. In addition, Kauthar also implies two other great blessings which Allah will bestow on him in the Hereafter. We had no means of knowing these; therefore the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself gave us news of them, and told us that Kauthar also implied them. First, the Fountain of Kauthar, which he will be granted on the Resurrection Day in the Plain of Assembly; second, the River Kauthar, which he will be granted in Paradise. About both such a large number of the Ahadith have been reported from him

through such a large number of the reporters that there remains no doubt about their authenticity.

What the Holy Prophet said about the fountain of Kauthar is as follows:

- (1) This Fountain will be granted to him on the Resurrection Day when there will be the cry of al-atah, al-atah (thirst, thirst!) on every side. The Holy Prophet's community will gather together before him at it and will be watered thereby. He himself will be the first to arrive at it and will be occupying the central position.

He has said: "This is a Fountain at which my Ummah will assemble on the Resurrection Day." (Muslim: Kitab as- Salat Abu Da'ud: Kitab as-Sunnah).

"I shall have arrived at the Fountain before you. " (Bukhari: Kitab ar-Riqaq and Kitab al-Fitan; Muslim: Kitab al-Fida and Kitab at-Taharah; Ibn Majah,: Kitab al Manasik and Kitab az-Zuhd. Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyyat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud `Abdullah bin `Abbas, Abu Hurairah.)

"I shall be there before you and shall bear witness on you, and by God, I am seeing my Fountain even at this time." (Bukhari: Kitab al-jana-iz Kitab al-Maghazi, Kitab ar-Riqaq).

Addressing an assembly of the Ansar, the Holy Prophet once said: "After me you will meet with selfishness and nepotism, endure it patiently until you meet me at the Fountain. " (Bukhari: kitab Manaqib al-Ansar and Kitab al-Maghazi; Muslim: Kitab al-Iman; Tirmidhi:Kitab al-Fitan).

"I shall be near the middle of the Fountain on the Resurrection Day." Muslim: Kitab al-Fada'il).

Hadrat Abu Barzah Aslami was asked: "Have you heard something about the Fountain from the Holy Prophet? He replied: Not once, or twice, or thrice, or four or five times, but over and over again. May Allah deprive of its water the one who be lies it." (Abu Da'ud: Kitab as-Sunnah).

Ubaidullah bin Ziyad thought that the traditions about the Fountain were false; so much so that he belied all the traditions reported by Hadrat Abu Barzah Aslami, Bara' bin 'Azib and `A'idh bin 'Amr. At last, Abu Sabrah brought out a writing which he had written down after hearing it from Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-`As, and it contained this saying of the Holy Prophet: "Beware! your place of meeting me will be my Fountain." (Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyyat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'As).

- (2) Different dimensions of the Fountain have been given in different traditions, but according to a large number of the traditions it will extend from Aylah (the present Israeli seaport of Ilat) to Sana'a of Yemen, or from Aylah to Adan, or from 'Amman to `Adan in length, and from Aylah to Juhfah (a place between Jeddah and Rabigh) in breadth. (Bukhari: Kitab ar-Riqaq; Abu Da'ud at Tayalisi: Hadith No. 995; Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyyat Abu Bakr Siddiq and `Abdullah bin `Umar; Muslim: Kasab al-Taharah and Kitab al-Fads il; Tirmidhi Abwab Sifat al-Qiyamah; Ibn Majah: Kitab az-Zuhd). From this it appears that on the Resurrection Day the present Red Sea itself will be turned into the Fountain of Kauthar. And the correct knowledge is only with Allah!

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- (3) About this Fountain the Holy Prophet has told us that water will be supplied to it from the River Kauthar of Paradise (which is being mentioned below). "Two channels from Paradise will flow into it and supply water to it." (Muslim: Kitab al-Fada'il). According to another tradition: "A canal from the River Kauthar of Paradise will be opened towards this Fountain. " (Musnad Ahmad Marwiyyat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud).
- (4) According to the description of it given by the Holy Prophet its water will be whiter than milk (according to other traditions whiter than silver, and according to still others, whiter than snow), cooler than snow, sweeter than honey; the earth of its bed will be more fragrant than musk; the water jugs set at it will be as numerous as the stars in the sky; the one who drinks from it would never thirst; and the one who is deprived of it will never have his thirst satisfied. These things with a little variation in wording have been reported in numerous Ahadith (Bukhari: Kitab ar-Rigaaq; Muslim: Kitab at-Taharah and Kitab al-Fada'il; Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyyat Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Umar, `Abdullah bin `Amr bin al-`As; Tirmidhi: Abwab Sifat al-Qiyanmah: Ibn Majah: Kitab az-Zuhd; Abu Da'ud: Tayalisi, Ahadith No. 995, 2135).
- (5) Concerning it the Holy Prophet warned the people of his time again and again, saying: "after me those from among you who would effect changes in my Way, will be removed from the Fountain and will be disallowed to approach it. I shall say: they are my companions, but it will be said: "Don't you know what they did after you? Then I too shall discard them and tell them to keep away." This subject too has been expressed in many traditions. (Bukhari: Kitab ar-Rigaaq, Kitab al-Fitan; Muslim: Kitab al-Tahara and Kitab al-Fada'it Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyyat Ibn Mas`ud, Abu Hurairah; Ibn Majah: Kitab al-Manasik. The Hadith which Ibn Majah has related in this connection contains very pathetic words. The Holy Prophet said: "Beware! I shall have arrived at the Fountain before you and shall pride myself by your means upon the greater numbers of my Ummah as against other ummahas Do not at that time cause my face to be blackened. Beware: I shall have some people released, and some people shall be separated from me. I shall say: O my Lord, they are my companions. He will reply: Don't you know what innovations they introduced after you?" According to Ibn Majah, these words were said by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in his Sermon at `Arafat.
- (6) Likewise, the Holy Prophet has also warned the Muslims coming after him till Resurrection, saying: "Whoever from among you will swerve from my Way and effect changes in it, will be removed from the Fountain. I shall say: O Lord, they belong to me, they are the people of my Ummah. In response it will be said: "Don't you know what changes they effected after you and then turned back on their heels?" Then I too shall turn them away and shall not allow them to approach the Fountain." Many traditions on this subject are found in the Hadith. (Bukhari: Kitab al-Musaqat, Kitab ar-Rigaaq, Kitab al-Fitan; Muslim: Kitab at-Taharah. Katab as-Salat, Kitab al-Fada'il; Ibn Majah: Kitab az-Zuhd; Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyyat Ibn `Abbas).

Traditions about this Fountain have been related by more than 50 companions, and the earliest scholars generally have taken it to mean the Fountain of Kauthar. Imam Bukhari has named the last chapter of his Kitab ar-Rigaaq as Babun fil hawd wa qual-Allahu inna a `tainak al-Kauthar, and in a tradition from Hadrat Anas there is the explanation that the Holy Prophet said about Kauthar: "It is a Fountain at which my Ummah shall alight. "

The River Kauthar which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) shall be granted in Paradise, also has been mentioned in a large number of the traditions of Hadith. Many traditions have

been related on the authority of Hadrat Anas in which he says (and in some he explains that he is reporting the exact words of the Holy Prophet himself) that on the occasion of mi'raj; the Holy Prophet was taken round Paradise and shown a river on the banks of which there were vaults of pearls or precious stones carved from within; the earth of its bed was of the strong scented musk. He asked Gabriel, or the angel who took him round, what it was. He replied that it was the River Kauthar, which Allah had granted him. (Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Abu Da'ud Tayalisi, Ibn Jarir)

Again, according to Hadrat Anas, the Holy Prophet was asked (or a person asked him): "What is the Kauthar?" He replied; "It is a River which Allah has granted me in Paradise. Its earth is musk: its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey " (Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Jarir)

According to another tradition of Musnad Ahmad, describing the merits of the River Kauthar the Holy Prophet said that at its bottom there are pearls instead of pebbles. Ibn `Umar says that the Holy Prophet said: "The Kauthar is a river in Paradise the banks of which are golden; it flows on pearls and diamonds (i.e. its bed has diamonds instead of pebbles); its earth smells sweeter than musk; its water is whiter than milk (or snow), cooler than snow and sweeter than honey." (Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, Ibn Abi Hatim, Darimi, Abu Da'ud Tayalisi, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Marduyah, Ibn Abi Shaibah).

Usamah bin Zaid says that the Holy Prophet once went to visit Hadrat Usamah; he was not at home; his wife entertained him and during the conversation said "My husband has told me that you have been granted a river in Paradise, which is called the Kauthar." The Holy Prophet replied "Yes, and its bed is of rubies and corals and emeralds and pearls" (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Marduyah. Though the sanad of this tradition is weak, the presence of a large number of traditions dealing with this subject strengthens it).

Besides these marfu traditions, a great many sayings of the Companions and their successors have been related in the Hadith to the effect that the Kauthar implies a river in Paradise. These traditions describe its qualities as have been mentioned above. For instance, the sayings of Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar, Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas, Hadrat Anas bin Malik, Hadrat `A'ishah, Mujahid and Abul `Aliysh are found in Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i; and the books of Ibn Marduyah, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Shaibah and other traditionists.

2Different commentaries of it have been reported from different scholars. Some of them take the Prayer to mean the five times obligatory Prayer (salat); some take it to imply the Prayer of `Id al-Adha, and some say that it implies the Prayer itself. Likewise, the meaning of wanhar and sacrifice according to some illustrious scholars, is to place the right hand over the left hand and to fold them on the chest in the Prayer; some say that it implies raising both hands with Allahu Akbar at the commencement of the Prayer; some say that it implies raising both hands at the commencement of the Prayer, at bowing for Ruku ` and after rising from Ruku `; and some say that it means performing the `Id al-Adha Prayer and then offering the animal sacrifice. But if the context in which this command has been enjoined, is considered, its meaning clearly seems to be: "O Prophet, when your Lord has granted you so many and so splendid blessing, then you should perform the Prayer only for His sake and offer sacrifice only for His sake." This Command was given in the environment when not only the pagans of Quraish but the pagans of entire Arabia and the world worshiped their self-made gods and

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offered sacrifices at their shrines. Therefore, the intention of the Command is "Contrary to the polytheistic practice, you should remain steadfast to your creed: your Prayer is only for Allah and your sacrifice also is for Him alone, as it has been said at another place: 'Declare, O Prophet, my salat and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for Allah, Lord of the universe, Who has no partner with Him. This is what I have been enjoined, and I am the first to surrender to Him.' (Al-An'am:162-163). This same meaning has been explained of it by Ibn 'Abbas, 'Ata', Mujahid, 'Ikrimah, Hasan Bari, Qatadah, Muhammad bin Ka'b al-Kurzi, Dahhak, Rabi' bin Anas, 'Ata' al-Khurasani and many other major commentators (may Allah bless them all) (Ibn Jarir). However, this by itself is correct that when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) enforced by Allah's command the practice of the 'Id al-Adha Prayer and the offering of animal sacrifice at Madinah, he himself gave the first place to the Prayer (salat and the second to the sacrifice, as commanded in the verses: Inna salati wa nusuki and fa-salli li-Rabbika wanhar, and enjoined on the Muslims also to do the same, i.e. they should first perform the Prayer and then offer the sacrifice. This is neither the explanation of this verse nor the occasion of its revelation but a deduction made by the Holy Prophet from these verses and his deduction of injunctions also is a kind of Divine inspiration.

3The word shani' as used, in the original is derived from sha'n, which means the hatred and spite because of which a person may start ill-treating another. At another place in the Qur'an it has been said: "(And O Muslims,) the enmity of any people should not so provoke you as to turn you away from justice." (Al-Ma'idah: 8). Thus, shani aka implies every such person who blinded by his enmity of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) should bring false accusations against him, slander and defame him and vent his personal spite against him by taunting and scoffing at him in every possible way.

4Huwal abtar: "He himself is abtar", i.e. though he calls you abtar he in fact himself is abtar. Some explanations of abtar have already been given in the Introduction to the Surah. It is derived from batar which means to cut off, but idiomatically it is used in a comprehensive meaning. In the Hadith, the rak'ah of the Prayer which is not coupled with another rak'ah is called butaira', i.e. the lonely rak'ah. According to another Hadith "Every piece of work, which is in any way important, is abtar if it is started without the glorification and praise of Allah", implying that it is cut off from the root, It has no stability, and it is doomed to failure. A man who fails to achieve his object is abtar as also the one who is deprived of all means and resources. A person who is left with no hope of any good and success in life is also abtar. A person who has been cut off from his family, brotherhood, associates And helpers is also abtar. The word abtar is also used for the man who has no male child, or whose male child or children have died, for after him there remains no one to remember him and he is lost to posterity . after death. In almost all these meanings the disbelieving Quraish called the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) abtar. At this, Allah said: "O Prophet, not you but your enemies are abtar." This was not merely a "reprisal", but a prophecy out of the most important prophecies of the Qur'an, which literally proved true. when it was made, the people regarded the Holy Prophet as abtar, and no one could imagine how the big chiefs of the Quraish would become abtar, who were famous not only in Makkah but throughout Arabia, who were successful in life, rich in worldly wealth and children, who had their associates and helpers everywhere in the country, who enjoyed intimate relations with all the Arabian tribes, being monopolists in trade and managers of Hajj. But not long afterwards the conditions altogether changed. There was a time when on the occasion of the Battle of the Trench (A.H. 5) the Quraish had invaded Madinah with the help of many Arabian and Jewish tribes, and the Holy Prophet being besieged had to resist the

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enemy by digging a trench around the city. After only three years, in A.H. 8, when he attacked Makkah, the Quraish had no helper and they had to surrender helplessly. After this within a year or so the whole Arabia came under his control, deputations of tribes from all over the country began to visit him to take the oaths of allegiance and his enemies were left utterly helpless and resourceless. Then they were so lost to posterity that even if their children survived, none of them today knows that he is a descendant of Abu Jahl, Abu Lahab, As bin Wail, or `Uqbah bin Abi Mu`ait, the enemies of Islam, and even if he knows it, he is not prepared to claim that his ancestors were those people. On the contrary, blessings are being invoked on the children of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) throughout the world; millions and millions of Muslims take pride in bearing relationship to him; hundreds of thousands of people regard it as a mark of honor and prestige to have descended not only from him but from his family and even the families of his Companions. Thus, some one is a Sayyid, another an 'Alavi, and `Abbasi, a Hashmi, a Siddiqi, a Faruqi, an `Uthmani, a Zubairi, or an Ansari, but no one is an Abu Jahli or Abu Lahabi. History has proved that not the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) but his enemies were, and are, abtar. "